

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9808

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5004

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION KINSHASA FROM LUBUMBASHI MAY 19
REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 0507

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI MOPS CG

SUBJ: SHABA II SITREP: MAY 19, 1978

1. AMERICAN CITIZENS:

LOCAL OFFICIALS AT KMAINA GAVE PERMISSION TO BRING TWO PCVS AT
LUABO (MR. AND MRS. PERRY) INTO THE TOWN OF KAMINA. THIS IS A
PRECAUTIONARY MOVE BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF COMMUNICATIONS AT
LUABO. SINCE THERE APPEARS TO BE NO THREAT TO KAMINA, CONSULATE
HOPES THAT PCVS WILL STAY IN KAMINA, BUT FINAL DECISION WILL
DEPEND ON METHODISTS WHO MAINTAIN RADIOS IN THE AREA.

2. MILITARY ACTION:

(A) LUBUMBASHI HAS BEEN BUZZING WITH RUMMORS SINCE NOON OF
MAY 18 THAT FRENCH/BELGIAN PARATROOPERS WOULD RELIEVE FOREIGN
COMMUNITY IN KOLWEZI. FOREIGN BROADCASTS BEGAN ANNOUNCING
INTERVENTION IN EARLY AFTERNOON. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ESPECIALLY
DISTURBED BY THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE EVACUATION BECAUSE
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THEY BELIEVE INVADERS LIKELY TO TAKE MORE SERIOUS ACTION AGAINST
CIVILIAN POPULATION NOW THAT PLANS ARE ANNOUNCED.

(B) LOCA FAZ SOURCES INFORMED CONSULATE THAT THERE WERE 12
KNOWN HOSTAGES OF INVADERS, OF WHOM 8 BELGIANS, 1 CANADIAN, 1
ITALIAN, 1 FRENCH AND 1 UNKNOWN. A PROMINENT ZAIRIAN SPECULATED
THAT THE REASON FOR NO ZAIRIAN HOSTAGES WAS THAT HIGH ZAIRIAN
OFFICIALS IN KOLWEZI MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED.

(C) FIGHTING WAS REPORTED IN KOLWEZI DURING MORNING OF MAY 18, BUT THE AFTERNOON WAS QUIET. INVADERS ARE SAID TO HAVE OCCUPIED GCM FACTORIES ON NORTH SIDE OF TOWN DURING MAY 17-18 (LUILU FACTORY, KAMOTO CONCENTRATOR, AND METALKAT). FAZ IS NOT THOUGHT TO HAVE ADVANCED BEYOND AIRPORT.

3. MILITARY POSITIONS:

SNEL RADIO PATCH REPORTED THAT FAZ HAD MOVED ITS HEADQUARTERS FROM NZILU NORTH TO THE VILLAGE OF KYAMASUMBA (1023S/2521E). WHEN DEPARTING NZILU, ONE OF THE FAZ UNITS LOOTED THE HOMES OF SOME OF THE LOCAL EUROPEANS. SUBSEQUENTLY, A MORE DISCIPLINED UNIT RETURNED TO NZILU.

4. POLITICAL:

(A) LUBUMBASHI AND ALL OF THE OTHER TOWNS OF SHABA HAVE REMAINED QUIET DURING LAST 24 HOURS. BORDER WITH ZAMBIA IS OPEN.

(B) CATHOLIC HAVE DECIDED TO PULL OUT THEIR MISSIONARIES AT KANZENZE (1032S/2512E) AND MPALA (1037S/2509E). MISSIONARY CONVOY PASSED LUENA (0917S/2546E) EN ROUTE TO KAMINA ON MAY 18. FAZ REMAINS IN CONTROL OF THE TWO MISSION TOWNS.

5. PSYCHOLOGICAL/RUMBLINGS

THURSDAY AFTERNOON MAY 18, RUMORS WERE CIRCULATING IN LUBUMBASHI THAT THE BELGIAN HAD ALREADY LANDED AT KOLWEZI. HENCE ANNOUNCEMENT BY ALL THE WESTERN INTERNATIONAL RADIO STATIONS THAT BELGIUM, FRANCE, THE UK AND THE US WERE MOUNTING AN AIRBORNE
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RESCUE MISSION WERE GREETED NOT WITH SURPRISE BUT WITH SCEPTICISM. IT IS STILL WIDELY BELIEVED THAT ON WEDNESDAY, EITHER THE FRENCH OR THE BELGIANS TOOK KOLWEZI AIRPORT, NOT THE ZAIRIANS. ANNOUNCEMENTS ALSO PROVOKED MUCH CHAGRIN INsofar AS WESTERN INTERVENTION SEEN AS ONCE AGAIN SHORING UP MOBUTU GOVERNMENT. LOCAL REPORTS ARE THAT SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN SEIZING AND BEATING PRIVATELY-EMPLOYED SENTINELS IN THE CENTER OF TOWN (THURSDAY NIGHT). POPULACE ALSO RENDERED INCREASINGLY DISCONTENT BY SHARP RISE IN PRICES OF BASIC GOODS (EG, MANIOC LEAVES) OVER PAST THREE DAYS. CERTAIN INTELLECTUALS COMMENT CYNICALLY THAT WESTERN FORCES INVOLVED ONLY TO SAVE KAMINA, WHICH THEY CALL A NATO BASE. EVEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SAID TO BE DISAPPOINTED IN WESTERN INTERVENTION, WHICH THEY SEE AS A HYPO-CRITICAL ACT: ON ONE HAND, THEIR BELGIAN TEACHERS ENCOURAGE THEM TO STAND UP TO THE GOVT FOR THEIR RIGHTS WHILE, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE WEST STEPS IN ONCE AGAIN TO SAVE SAME GOVT.

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